

*The management
wishes to salute
Jen Howk*

*... AND MORE
HOT BODS
THAN YOU
CAN SHAKE
A STICK AT!*

THE OMEN

THE OMEN

NOT TO BE SOLD TO MINORS

HAMPSHIRE'S
MEN'S MAGAZINE

c o n t e n t s

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The Omen

Volume 10, Number 7
January 30, 1998

EDITORS and STAFF

Jordan "Mr. President" Strauss.....	Editor in Chief
Michelle Beach.....	Managing editor
Jennifer Howk.....	Managing editor
Jacob Chabot.....	Art editor
Katie Matlock.....	proofreading editor
Denise Shivrarnin.....	Photo editor
Mat Lauritsen.....	Public Relations
Jeff Barnett.....	Mrs Lewinsky
Rebecca Mazer.....	sex editor
Cat Whitehead.....	Sexist editor
Bert Cattaveri.....	Secretary of War
Dave Killen.....	Paranoid as all hell
Wade Stuckwisch.....	Lame duck editor
Eric Jenkins.....	With yo mama
Aemily Reshen.....	Music editor
Casey Nordell.....	Linguistics editor
Jon Klein.....	A damn queer

CONTRIBUTORS

Kai Curtis
Robert Edmondson
Ross Ford
Mark Hugo
Cas Lucas

"No quote. Go wild."



Submit to us ...

The Omen accepts submissions from any member of the Hampshire community. **We won't edit anything you write** (unless it's for spelling or grammar), as long as you're willing to **be responsible for what you say**. Libel, which we personally find amusing and entertaining for countless hours, is just not an option in this forum.

Submissions can include anything involving the Hampshire community and are due on Wednesday nights at 8 p.m. **Submit to Michelle Beach (B-311, box 1127) or Jordan Strauss (J-309, box 1007).** If you're interested in writing regularly, talk to Mat Lauritsen (J-304). **We prefer submissions on disk** — IBM or high density Mac — but hard copy is okay. Label your stuff well and it will get back to you.

So give us your news, commentary, short fiction, comics, satire, first born, poetry, art, bulletins, questions, and anything else you can think of, and **your beloved community rag will dish it back 700 times.** What better way to **be heard?**

The Omen is a completely non-partisan forum for expression. The views and opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors alone.

EDITORIAL

by Jen Howk

The true nature of cabin fever, like the exaggerated importance of sleep and the continued employability of Cameron Diaz, is rarely represented in a just and reasonable manner. The familiar, comforting tinges of detachment one becomes accustomed to in the far north is part of the considerable charm of the Alaskan winter. It's a very familiar feeling, reminiscent of my childhood — **the longer it's dark, the darker it is, the more snow piled up outside, the safer I feel.**

Sadly, it's getting harder and harder to experience a non-invasive season. The mayor of Anchorage, for instance, is infamous for his City of Lights program, which involves every hapless citizen in the greater Anchorage bowl throwing some white holiday lights on their homes. Fortunately I live an hour away from Anchorage city limits and am not subjected to such self-indulgent capitalist crap. OUR mayor is a good Alaskan isolationist and still appreciates the benefits of a real winter. But that's not enough for me. I'm going to have to head even further north when I have children—I refuse to expose them to such blatant cultural subversion.

So, obviously, coming to Juneau in January really fucks me up.

Southeast Alaska isn't the silent, wind-swept, wintertime tundra of yore, it's a beautiful community built on a mountain that loses a few feet to the sea every year. There's more daylight here. It's warmer. Not nearly as Dr. Zhivago-esque. I've come to Juneau this time of year before, but this year is particularly weird, because I spent the first 3 months of winter in Massachusetts. Winter my ass. Jesus, you all are such pansies. Give my frozen chickens in the garage a call in February.

If I sound a little bitter and/or unnecessarily random, my apologies. I'm just pissed off in general this month, and I guess I'm yearning for the sanctuary that only some really hard ass cabin fever can give me. I'm on leave from Hampshire this semester, dragged away kicking and screaming to make enough money to come back in the fall. So I'm working in the state legislature, doing the people's business and living with three lawmakers in a gingerbread house halfway up a mountain. Life's a fucking sitcom.

In other news, I don't know when Strauss and the gang are planning to get this issue to you, but as I write this all anyone around here is talking about is the White House-Lewinsky fiasco. What the fuck! I agree with my co-worker who was a White House intern two years ago—no more than 50 feet from the Oval Office—when he says he can't

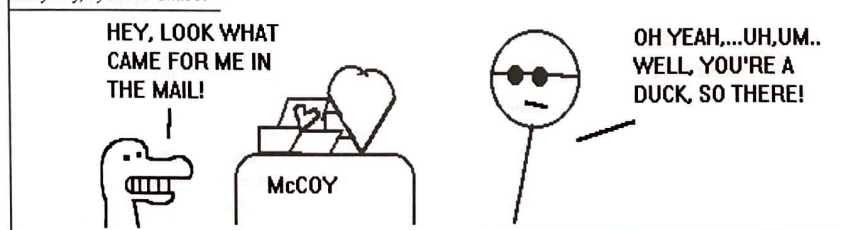
You give me cabin fever

imagine this young temptress getting anywhere near Clinton. The man is never alone. What's he gonna do, pick one naive young skirt out of four trillion strutting around the Hill and say, Hey, Bennett, could you give me and Monny here 20 minutes alone? And, I'm sorry, but this young lady, while I'm sure she's a lovely person, just doesn't strike me as someone worth throwing the presidency away for. I mean, Jeeze-zus! She went to Lewis and Clark! I just won't believe the man is that stupid.

At any rate, I'll stop my rambling now and wrap up with my standard Hampshire rant. I'm actually having a pretty good time here—it's nice to be back where terms like Tort Reform mean something. But I'm unspeakably pissed off at Hampshire. You have to understand, this is a place I'm fiercely committed to. I first applied in '95, deferred a year, made it last fall by the skin of my teeth, and had to leave halfway through my first year because I just couldn't afford it anymore. Because of a bitch loophole in the system, financial aid holds me accountable to my AWOL father's income, even though I pay my entire bill myself and have no idea where he is. IT SUCKS. I'm not the only Hampshire student in this situation, and I'm certainly not alone nationally. But until Greg decides to be a man and does something, I'll take every second semester to work if I have to. I have to believe Hampshire's worth fighting for.

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Surly Boy, by Jacob Chabot



NEWS

WUXTRY, WUXTRY!

Welcome to the point.

Theft and Unions on campus, Oh My

locked door.

Derrick Elemes, Director of Public Safety, reminds all students to keep their doors

and windows locked when away from rooms.

If anyone has information regarding these incidents, they should please contact public safety.

Unions on Campus

The union vote was held on Friday, January 30.

The professional staff did not obtain enough votes to form a union.

However, the nonprofessional staff votes were tied 72 to 72, with nine contested votes. This means that the issues will now be decided in court. **O**

Theft on Campus

Two incidents of property theft occurred on January 24. A room in Prescott was entered through an open window and an Enfield room was entered via an un-

Hampshire Campus Police Log 12/2-12/8 and 1/20-1/26

Larceny

• Dec 2, 2:00p.m.: Enfield, H.C. video camera reported stolen.

• Dec 4, 3:50p.m.: Bike reported stolen from outside of Merrill and Dakin, later found.

• Dec 7, 11:05p.m.: Motor vehicle theft in Dakin Lot, vehicle found not stolen, owner picked it up.

• Jan 24, 3:20a.m.: Prescott room entered through unlocked window; items stolen.

• Jan 24, 1:00p.m.: Enfield room entered through unlocked window; items stolen.

Animals

• Dec 3, 9:57a.m.: Enfield dog taken to pound.

• Dec 5, 1:40p.m.: Greenwich dog taken to pound.

Etc.

• Dec 4, 2:25a.m.: Intrusion alarm, admission accidental ac-

tivation.

• Dec 4, 10:00a.m.: Unwanted person, individual at bus stop removed from campus.

• Dec 6, 11:21p.m.: Fire cracklers set off ousted of library.

Vandalism

• Dec 6, 11:49p.m.: Graffiti in library elevator.

• Jan 22, 12:31a.m.: Merrill fire extinguisher discharged.

• Jan 26, 3:33a.m.: CSC, spray paint on two doors.

Noise complaints

• Dec 7, 3:20a.m.: Prescott, re apartment 82.

• Jan 20, 12:59a.m.: Enfield

• Jan 21, 2:37a.m.: Prescott

• Jan 22, 2:00a.m.: Enfield, re apartment 41.

Traffic

• Dec 7, 7:50p.m.: Hit and run accident in the FPH Lot.

• Jan 20, 1:10a.m.: Motor vehicle tow, Enfield; Car left prior to tow.

• Jan 20, 3:40p.m.: Minor motor vehicle accident on back road.

• Jan 25, 1:39a.m.: Motor vehicle tow, Greenwich vehicle removed from fire lane.

Fire

• Dec 5, 1:49a.m.: Fire alarm in Dakin, incense on K3.

• Dec 6, 9:00p.m.: Fire hazard in Prescott, outside trash can smoldering.

• Dec 8, 11:48p.m.: Fire alarm in Greenwich, cooking smoke in apartment 21.

• Jan 21, 2:05p.m.: Fire alarm cause by leaking water in the Music and Dance Building.

• Jan 21, 6:48p.m.: Fire alarm in Greenwich, cooking smoke in apartment 11.

• Jan 24, 3:56a.m.: Fire alarm in Merrill, cooking smoke in A1 lounge. **O**

Not my first night at college

by Dave Killen

It was a dark and stormy night. Really. Kato, fresh of the bus from Washington, was spending his first night on campus at our very own Hampshire College. Overwhelmed by the wealth of entertainment opportunities that greeted him, Kato balked at his new roommate's suggestion of coffee at a place called the Black Hole Cafe or something. Opting instead to stay safely within the bounds of his new dorm room, he began to compose a letter. At this point Kato's computer still worked and hadn't yet turned to the dark side. Still, its rosy disposition did nothing to alleviate the fact that it had no printing capability. Kato cursed the darkness and the sadness and all else that had conspired to make his dot matrix printer from 1984 too heavy to ship all the way from Washington. His poetic prose would not enter the material world. It was rough, but he was only down, not yet out. Disk in hand, Kato headed for the computer lab.

His watch said 11:30 as he silently glided down the stairs and into the rich darkness of the Merrill courtyard. It was late, but a notice he had gotten in the mail said the lab was open until midnight. Not one to question authority, Kato assumed this to be true. Only later would he learn of the lies and half-truths so often perpetuated by the administration. **Like you can actually eat SAGA food.** There was no way he could know it at the time, but Kato would go on to lose 20 pounds as a direct result of this lie

alone. That night, however, the computer lab lie was destined to impact his young life in a much more profound way.

He arrived to find the library building open but the library itself dark and its doors locked. Knowing the computer lab to be on the third floor, but never actually having been there before, Kato sought out the stairwell he knew must exist. He found it next to the mailroom, door unlocked. Venturing up the dimly lit stairs, he wondered where everyone else who would undoubtedly be using an important facility like the computer lab was. Still, he was reassured when, on the second or third flight up, he began to hear singing coming from above. Kato smiled as he allowed himself a moment to reflect with pleasure on what a happy place this was. Then, his Converse All-Stars slap-slapping on the concrete, he continued up the stairs.

As he climbed, Kato realized with considerable interest that the amount of light in the stairwell seemed to be directly proportional to his height in the building. By the time he was halfway to the top he had the distinct feeling of being in a suspense film. Kato thought this was pretty cool, having always been a fan of suspense films. He was beginning to wonder, though, exactly what song was being sung by the person at the top of the stairs. It didn't sound like anything he'd heard on the radio. Kato marvelled at how much he had still to learn. Obviously, at a school of such diverse personalities and backgrounds, music would be only

SHAKEN, not STIRRED

one of many rich new areas for him to explore.

Just as he was beginning to enjoy it, the singing stopped. Kato stopped too, hoping it would return. It did, and Kato smiled, continuing his ascent. Abruptly it stopped again. Kato followed suit, waiting until it started back up to continue climbing the stairs. After stop-starting several more times, Kato noticed a definite correlation between the slap-slapping of his Chucks and the willingness of the singer to perform. **It suddenly felt more like he was in an experimental art film.** Kato quietly backtracked down the stairs, the singing accompanying him, thinking the Black Hole didn't sound like such a bad idea after all.

His roommate was indeed at the cafe, accompanied by a girl from their hall. After a shockingly expensive, small and bad-tasting milkshake, Kato mentioned the singing to the other two.

"I bet it was two people having sex!" his roommate said enthusiastically. Kato doubted that, but made little attempt to dissuade the ensuing trip back to the library. As the three of them ascended the ever-darkening stairs, Kato's roommate provided a loud and explicit commentary on his sex-in-the-stairway theory.

"Maybe there'll be a puddle up there!" he said, "We wouldn't want to step on that in the dark!" Kato, who at this point was more concerned with the prospect of living under the same roof for any length

continued on page 6



By Mathew Lauritsen

At one time or another, all people are consumed by the "Pleonastic Plethora," the state that overrides the sensibilities of the mind with a tidal wave of redundancy. A person mildly afflicted by the Pleonastic Plethora will describe the amount of love they have for ice cream as being "a very, very a lot," or will find themselves compulsively checking their watch every thirty seconds. Individuals wracked by more extreme cases, however, find that they lose the ability to communicate at all, their minds overflowing with shapeless, would-be expression.

It is the infamous PP that causes one to lie on the floor, face down, and call to the Master of the Mundane to "Please, please, end life as we know it, please!" A fellow who finds himself punching walls accidentally or stomping the hell out of snow sculptures just because it seems easier than standing still is experiencing the peak of the PP. **The Pleonastic**

Pleomastic Plethra

Plethora could be described as the brutal extension of boredom, the hysterical calm that has caused perfectly reasonable people to throw chairs, randomly drop-kick belongings or even shoot televisions.

According to my esteemed colleague Joshua Hart, Ph.D., Pleonastic Plethora can be most effectively combated by the attainment of a state known widely as Gravitational Platitude. Introduced in January of 1998, the principium of Gravitational Platitude states that once an individual has effectively flattened his or her spasm charts and attained an inner calm, he or she will naturally begin to experience a magnetic attraction toward what later will become the center of his or her universe. These lucky minds find themselves freed from social tyranny, unhindered by questions of too much

or too little self-esteem, and are generally in a terrific mood. In fact, one subject experiencing Gravitational Platitude was heard to remark "It's like I wake up in the morning and I actually want to get up!"

Pleonastic Plethora, however, is a cunning adversary for the stunning innovations of Gravitational Platitude. In fact, PP is often able to disguise itself as GP until the very last moment, when, rather than writing the great American novel, a subject will actually cock his head to one side, kick over a table, and attempt to urinate upon the other subjects.

So when searching for a state of mind, remember "Platitude not Pleonasm." Though the roller coaster ride of Pleonastic Plethora, the brain overflow that leads only to senseless repetition and physically manifested frustration, can be, in retrospect, entertaining, only through the miracles of true Gravitational Platitude can you experience anti-aggravation, and the goofiest things in life. **O**

continued from page 5
time with this obviously disturbed person, ignored this concern and pressed on, determined to uncover the nature of the phantom singer. He realized with some regret that no musical accompaniment had been provided for him this time. Once they had reached the pitch-black top of the stairs, he couldn't help feeling a little sad. It looked like the computer lab was closed for sure.

"I guess there's no sex up here after all," said his roommate, sounding more than a little disappointed.

Peering into the darkness, Kato stated the obvious in his best Sam Jackson imitation.

"I can't see a *GOD DAMN* thing." He smiled at his own ability to make "Pulp Fiction" allusions. His amusement was short-lived.

"What are you doing up here?" asked an annoyed disembodied male voice from the darkness.

"Yeah, what *are* you doing here?" chimed in a female one, which Kato recognized to be that of the singer, with obvious post-coital undertones.

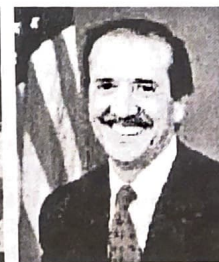
Kato, who had never in all his life held a stronger wish for a flash-equipped camera, managed to stutter out an explanation of his quest for the computer lab. "Well it's closed!" he was told, but the three of them were already halfway down the stairs and in flight towards the dorms. Kato vowed never to return to the computer lab, and only much later, after forces beyond his control caused his own computer to betray him, did he find the courage to go back. He took the elevator. **O**

A Memo to Mr. Strauss

by Bert Cattivera

I do not understand the media treatment of the bizarre death of Michael Kennedy. He had recently admitted conducting a sleazy affair with a fourteen-year-old, and was treated like a hero by the press after he was "killed" in a "tragic" accident, according to the Los Angeles Times. Congressman Salvatore "Sonny" Bono also plowed into a tree within a week of Kennedy, but Bono received no similarly glorifying series of obituaries. Strange, considering that Bono was neither a child rapist nor a Kennedy . . . he was, by all accounts, a respectable Italo-American.

I cannot help but admire the way the Kennedys handled the death of Michael Kennedy, just as his personal history of being a child rapist had become a political liability to a family with its drunken eyes on the governorship of Massachusetts. Analysts suggest that Michael Kennedy's death may clear the way for Rep. Joe Kennedy to seek the governorship. Cher has yet to reveal whether she plans to use Sonny Bono's death as a springboard for glory of her own.



Left: Michael Kennedy;
Right: Congressman Sonny Bono

And how to vet my own sleazy image? Like Michael Kennedy, I hope to be exonerated by the liberals upon my forthcoming death. On the other hand, let the liberals eat shit and die an altogether less glamorous death than mine. I could always purchase a dog and stage a press conference, like Nixon did with his "Checkers" speech, or like Clinton did when he bought that ugly dog to divert attention from his degrading fundraising activities, an exercise in political whoredom. Mere dogs cannot compete with properly-planned death in terms of providing a slick facade to your wretched, sleazy life.

Look what death accomplished for Jesus Christ, who sacrificed himself to his crazed followers, begging his "father" to retrieve him from the admittedly ill-conceived planet God had created and subsequently renounced, after unleashing floods, locust, Jesus and other plagues on humanity.

It is crucial to hire seasoned spin doctors and media consultants to "manage" your death. My media apparatus is less impressive than the Kennedy Machine. So, it is fair to say

TALES from the bottom of THE BOTTLE

that my own bizarre death will be lackluster and sophomoric compared with that of Michael Kennedy, who played a fatal game of touch football on a ski slope. Kennedy ate shit in a game in which the "ball" was probably a frozen half-gallon of vodka. (Memo to Boris Yeltsin: I have two life tickets and a bottle of vodka we can toss back and forth at Vail.)

Perhaps the Russians don't play football; perhaps the Russians prefer ice hockey on skis and boxing and ultimate Frisbee, and you can see them coming down the slopes wearing boxing gloves or halfheartedly impersonating Hampshire students while playing Frisbee and wearing the uniforms of communism. I have no idea. (Memo to Apologists for Communism: I have two lift tickets and a Frisbee we can hurl at each other in an egalitarian fashion before one or both of us collide with the inevitable tree.)

Doctors will declare my dubious "cause of death" to be "El Nino." I will be killed by a bogusly-hyped media shitstorm of tropical weather worsened by Albert Gore Jr.'s fearsome Greenhouse Effect. Thus, the newspapers will be able to combine their favorite elements into one story: a bizarre celebrity death caused by a popular weather pattern, with alarming undertones of global disaster. **O**



by Jacob Chabot

Despise what was claimed in last issue's article, "On Reported Fluff and Other News", the Omen HAS gone soft, or as I like to put it, lost its balls.

- Point number one (lets keep count shall we?), the trend of the week. I don't know if this qualifies as going soft, but it certainly means losing its creative edge. I've been informed that this issue, the Omen will run phoney, (supposedly) humorous news stories. Hmmmm...sounds sort of like . . . oh I don't know..maybe..THE WEEKLY WEEK! I know the Weekly Week isn't the first publication to do this sort of thing, but it is the one appearing regularly (and recently) on campus. I keep getting asked to do South Park covers. There is no reason behind that other than that South Park is one of the most popular things on campus recently. Is this method of jumping on the bandwagon responsible for things like the news and police log (ala the Forward)? **And what's this thing with making part of the article big and bold.** It's just imitating the form of somebody else's articles to make them look spiffy. Often it's just a random quote from the article.
- Point two, the constant apologizing. Last issue's editorial was just one big apology. First, "a deep and heartfelt apology (isn't THAT

touching) to Richard Wright" for leaving out a portion of his article and reprinting the entire two pages. Then the Forward gets an apology for getting ragged on, PLUS a bonus ass kissing. At the end of the editorial, the Forward gets another apology for replacing their pulled ad with a fake ad. The ad appears later on in the issue with the header "It's a parody kids." You don't say. Is this supposed to be some kind of disclaimer so we don't think the Forward is truly desperate? If the Omen can't rag on anybody without apologizing, then what's the point?

- Point three, the diluting of Section Hate! This column doesn't mean anything anymore. What used to be reserved for the most spiteful article of the issue now exists as a mere "catch-all" header. These articles aren't particularly bitter and sometimes even share Section Hate! with another article. For example, last issue's Section Hate! was composed of two articles. The first ("A Question of Will") is some frickin' pep talk! It's half time and we're in the locker room and down by twenty . . . The second ("Fuck Tibet: How to be a Freak at Hampshire") is a bizarre oddity of an article with no hate in sight. I realize that the content of these articles isn't the Omen's fault, but lumping them under Section Hate! is. To interpret an old saying, if we don't have anything hateful to say, don't have a Section Hate! I say we raise a kid from birth, keeping him (or her) locked in a small room, and barrage him (or her)

Hateful enough for you?

with cold showers and electric shocks. **Upon maturity, this kid should be bitter enough to do Section Hate!**

- Which brings me to point four, it's not just the submissions. I know this because three months ago, instead of the suggested South Park cover, I submitted a mock porn mag cover (that will supposedly run this issue). The Omen balked and the cover was pulled at the last second and replaced with a weaker version. I received many reasons for this like it didn't have anything to do with the content, didn't want to get sued for using the picture, DIDN'T WANT TO OFFEND ANYONE. After protesting (nice to know being art editor has some pull) the cover was postponed to a later date and replaced at the ULTIMATE last minute with that god-awful Clinton/Hussein American Gothic cover. Why? Because the Omen has turned into a sissy mama's boy of a magazine.

- Point five, which isn't really a point, I'd just like to bring up some random rants. What's up with this "Editor's Choice" crap? Why promote one column over others? In Bed With-what was once a promising concept now just interviews boring people nobody knows, asking questions nobody cares about. What happened to the wacky questions like, "Would you do me?"

In closing, I'd just like to apologize to everyone I might have offended in my article. **O**

Ring side tickets!

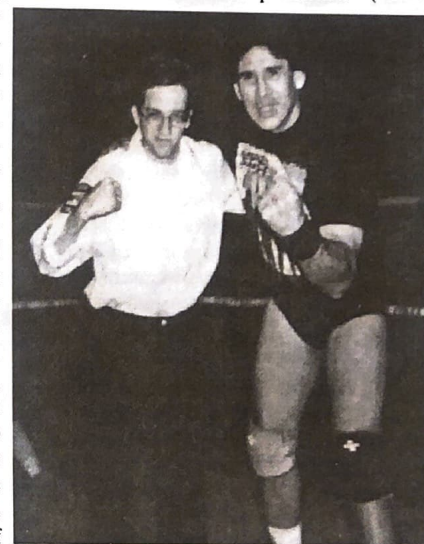
by Mark "Who's Your Daddy" Hugo

I got up not knowing that day would be one of the best days of 1998. Sure, that's not too tough, it being January. Have you ever seen the movie 2000 Maniacs? No? It doesn't really matter, anyway. I started my day with a lovely breakfast with mommy and daddy. I was

pleased not to be driving my own car (I was still a bit nervous that five hicks in a BMW were looking for me to discuss a bit of road rage). After breakfast I made my way to the city that never sleeps soundly, Danbury, Connecticut. There I rendezvous with my good friend, Ryan The Straight Edge Razor Schick. First stop on my White Trash Saturday: the Salvation Army. One shirt and one vest later, we were off to the pawn shop. There, I scored two bitching eight-tracks (Battle Star Galactica and Empire Strikes Back soundtracks). What next for a couple of

swinging guys? The porn shop, of course. **I ultimately settled on the Hustler fun pack.** I have a funny feeling the other perverts thought we were a gay couple (we have a bad habit of staring at the gay porn section for five minutes, then finally saying to ourselves "oh, wrong section.") With a rumbling in our middle-class stomachs we headed for my favorite diner for a heart stopping

meal of grease and caffeine. Oh, did I forget to mention that we were the proud owners of ring side tickets to a night of CWA pro-wrestling? King Kong Bundy, Killer Kowalski, Tito Santana - they were all there. The wacky thing about this wrestling night was that it was held at a high school. It was sold to parents as a



wholesome event to raise cash for the senior class of Ridgefield High. The couple sitting in front of us thought they were going to a high school wrestling match. Of course, they were shitheads. I had forgotten about the rampant homophobia that lurks in the halls of most American high schools. The second to last match was the Pink Assassin (a chubby guy in a pink get up with a really bad lisp) against who other than Mister USA. Oh, that's cute; Mister USA battles

out America's worst enemy, a flamboyant homosexual. The Razor and I were the only people in the crowd cheering for him. The match was rigged in Mister USA's favor, so I felt the need to tell the ref exactly what I thought of him and his closest kin. I just about threw a chair at the pissa (unfortunately, he was the school's

wrestling coach - that might have gotten a bit sticky). As a finally, I got into the ring with Tito Santana. They lured me in with the promise of a picture with the aging 80's champ. Out of nowhere he lunged at me. I deftly avoided his crushing blows, frantically looking for help. From top rope flew the might Ryan the Straight Edge Razor Schick. During the ensuing body slam I grabbed a handy folding chair. The beating didn't end until Tito knew who the real Daddy was. Later, Killer Kowalski (bad boy from the golden years of pro-wrestling) gave a stirring

speech about our butt-kicking expertise, then went on to win a little rumble of his own. Seeing a stiff old guy take down a twenty-something wrestler then do some weird kind of old-school move involving an Indian rug burn and a stomach was probably the strangest thing I've seen in while (almost topped the time I walked in on my preppie upper middle-class roommate and his friend getting down to **O** Gangster's Paradise).



ONIONS Eating at Saga:

by Ross Ford and Cas Lucas

Editor's note:

The following is part of a series of articles written for David Kerr's *Investigative Reporting course* last semester. The author's wish for us to note that this was handed in on hard copy and soaked in cat urine.

Warning:

The following piece is in no way an attempt to make an issue out of a completely pointless tidbit of campus news. This deals with the meal plan, an issue to anyone in the dorms, since all dorm residents are forced to play bitches under the current contract.

It Begins in the Morning

It is too early to be this sick. I am not infected with the flu, nor am I going to vomit, at least not yet, but this pain in my stomach is due to something. One possible reason, and my strongest lead so far involves the large quantity of grease I recently ingested. I am speaking of the campus meal plan's healthy breakfast, which today included such all time stars as the unchanging scrambled eggs, grease laden sausage (mmm!), soggy French toast, and the ever so light and crispy tater tots. **The tots were in high form today, crispy all the way through, not squishy in the middle like they were in elementary school.** At this point in time, I believe the excessive crunchiness was due to intense frying, or possibly over zealous reheating of previously uneaten food.

But the bowling ball in my stomach is only an after effect of pro-

longed mandatory exposure to the magic of Marriott. Breakfast is only the beginning of a full day of inexpensively prepared fast food. There are so many options at lunch to compliment the indigestible mess most students have already excreted by noon.

Take for example Monday, October 20, only four short days before the old people with the money started arriving for parent's weekend. For lunch we had the choice between the spicy chicken and vegetable stuff (4.4 grams of fat), which feature limp vegetables including enormous chunks of onion and the spinach noodle casserole (14.6 grams of fat) which, coincidentally, also contains onions.

Appearing as side dishes were the monte cristo sandwich, the small sandwich halves with the mysterious redd filling, a small sandwich for 13.4 grams of fat (what is that red stuff?), and the spicy French fries also low in fat with 16.1 grams per 3oz. serving. Marriott offers several varieties of French fries which are only a small part of the much larger plan called the Rotating Fried Potato Module, a meal in itself or combined with the options of pizza, salad, and deli sandwiches. Mmm, warm meat.

The Multiple Piece Squad

What I am about to say may be of interest to anyone who regularly chooses the pizza option, particularly those of you on the Multiple Piece Squad. One slice of Marriott's pepperoni pizza contains nearly 28 grams of fat, which works out to 252 calories from fat alone (it you're counting). Cheese pizza is slightly

less impressive with a mere 14.6 grams per slice, whereas the Superpizza, a masterful blend of peppers, mushrooms and onion (yes it is listed as a topping) ranks among the finest with 21.7 grams of the good stuff. So that's why it tastes so good you say, but wait, there's more. **A meal like this is the perfect lead in to a good nap before an enticing selection of heavy foods to prepare you for the long haul until the feeding station re-opens.**

At dinner, all three entrees (two meat, one vegetarian) were equally high in fat. Beef and vegetables stir fry has 13.4 grams of fat as well as fried limp vegetables including large chunks of onion. The breaded sole is graced with 15.4 luscious grams of grease and the mushroom curry is blessed with 13.6 grams of fat plus large squares of onion. Surprisingly low in fat considering the next night we ate barbecued chicken with 25 grams of fluorescent grease per "serving."

Keep in mind that these entrees are the bulk of the seven dollars you pay for dinner. Approximately 2/3s of admission price is for labor, preparing food and cleaning up, the other third covers the main entree for some of those on the meal plan (they count on people not showing up) and a small portion for the bagels and cereal that most of us eat. The reason that they can offer meat entrees for under \$3 is that most students don't eat them. Many people who have

paid to eat don't show up, or eat cereal for 70 cents a bowl.

The Price You Pay

Price is one thing when you consider the price of a single meal. After all it is just one meal. But when you take the price of three meals and multiply it by the days in the academic year, the price per meal is a great deal more important. When the dollar amount is \$2,270 for the board plan, it also matters what you get for this price. A quick way to get angry at Marriott is to repeat this phrase every night at dinner: "this cost me seven dollars." Seven dollars is reasonable when you consider that it is an all you can eat affair, but what about the starch expanding properties of carbonated beverages? So while you're paying for the most you can eat, you are eating foods that will fill your stomach faster. This also explains to a certain extent the horrible sinking feeling in your stomach as you leave the building. What your seven dollars at dinner pays for is the main entree for those brave enough to try it. The main two entrees (the meat dishes) cost more money to make than dishes without meat. If everyone ate a meat entree, the price per meal would be much higher. What you don't see is that not only does everyone not eat the big entree, but not everyone is expected to in fact Marriott depends on some (more than you think) students to make less expensive choices at mealtime. A certain percentage can be written off immediately as vegetarian. The vegetable entrees cost considerably less than their meat contain-

Onions, fat and other horrors.

ing counterparts.

A better way to save money would be instead of serving mostly vegetable dishes, make dishes so unappetizing that many students opt for the most cost effective foods, bagels and cereal. **By far the cheapest and most stomach filling foods for the money, many students eat these foods several times daily, as opposed to their traditional serving time at breakfast.** It is beyond Marriott to admit to intentionally provoking this choice, but it is at the same time strange to even though they don't intend it, many students make a seven dollar dinner of 30 cent bagels and a 70 cent bowl of cereal. Now that's cash value. Imagine what you could buy at an in town food provider for \$7... that's two small subs from Cantone's or a medium pizza, or two extra value meals and a milkshake... etc... etc...

Lunch is slightly more cost effective for the student. Lunch is \$4.50, and for this you get the rotating and ever appetizing meat entree, the option of grease laden pizza, the Rotating Fried Potato Module (often the center piece of a corn flakes lunch), your choice of starch expanding French fries (do you wonder the why the machine is always out?), and a salad made with deli meat exposed to the warm air from 11a.m. to 4:30p.m. Is it worth four and a half bucks for a bowl of nachos and a Pepsi? How about two slices of pizza and a Pepsi, this would be five bucks at Antonio's. In town

you could get five regular Taco Hell tacos, or two super tacos and drink.

Here's my favorite price comparison: For \$10, less than the combined price of lunch and dinner at Marriott, you could eat a full buffet meal at Bub's Barbecue. This includes unlimited hot and cold bar (beans, fries, sweet potatoes, soup, etc... all with flavor) and a huge portion of meat treated in the proper fashion by a man who works in "the pit." Now, for seven bucks eat Marriott, you get a serving or two of Texas style food, the veal parmesan, plus their unappetizing selection of flavorless mush. Whereas for meat at Bub's you get a barbecues half chicken, or a rack of ribs, or a plate full of pulled pork, or even a gator tail. **Now what's strange about this is that you would assume that Bub's would be losing money; their establishment is small, and in this health conscious age, not many get it on with the pulled pork.** Compared to Marriott, who has a guaranteed client base, serves students who would rather eat steamed vegetables and bagels than gator tail (which ain't cheap), not to mention that this passive client base is constantly nauseated to the point of nearly non-existent appetite. The question seems not to be can Bub's break even under such circumstances, Bub's is doing fine, the question is how large of a profit margin does Marriott intend to make.

Look for part 2 in the next Omen!

Classes, what classes?

by Robert Edmondson

I am writing to bring to your attention the appalling state of your academic registration process. This problem, which has been escalating every year, is now intolerable. The result is the huge degradation in the quality of the education you are offering your students.

I came to Hampshire College as a transfer and was impressed by the possibilities at this school, as told me by the Admissions Office. When I asked if it was hard to get into classes at such a small school, I was answered, "**You will have no trouble getting into any classes, except maybe film. But since film will be your concentration, then you will definitely be able to get into those classes.**"

This is obviously a load of propagandic bull. None of this is true. Take pre-registration: I showed up at Central Records two hours before my assigned time slot to find a hundred people standing in the halls of Cole Science. The queue ran up the hall and back, then out the door. Two and a half hours later (only thirty minutes after the beginning of the actual slot) I got to register for my classes. Out of six choices all were filled. I was wait-listed for two, the other wait-lists were filled. I could only pre-register for OPRA classes, nothing even vaguely academic or related to

my concentration. This is not how a good academic system works.

So I resolved I would do the most when the first week of classes began. I showed up for my classes, not pre-registered, and tried to talk to the professors. The first class, a comparative religion class with Alan Hodder, had room for only twenty-five people. Forty showed up (nearly twice as many as the section could hold). Next was Film Production I. Fifteen slots open; about sixty-five people showed up to enter the lottery. Even the lottery system has become a joke; there are more people who have passed the lottery than there are spaces in the class. Then came Introduction to Drawing, again twice as many people as spaces in the class. Do you notice a particular trend here?

Now as a transfer, my funds are limited. I have invested two years at another private institution and only have enough for two years here. (Which I was told by Admissions would be tight, but nothing to worry about). With the extreme demand on class space, I cannot get into the classes I need to graduate. Instead I am forced to take "filler" classes, usually third-choices, which only vaguely relate to my concentration. My time is limited, as is my money, and as needed classes are in extreme demand, my patience becomes just as limited.

Do you think I am a unique case? That I am facing these problems only because of my limited time as a transfer? Hardly. I watched in the Film I lottery as

Division II and III students, with an emphasis in film were turned away. I watch as students on my hall scurry from one class to the next, just trying to get into something. No person I know could not tell you what is their exact schedule; "maybe in two weeks," they mumble.

Now, as a student, I am hardly the one to remind you, the administration, to remedy the problems in this institution's registration process; that is supposedly your responsibility. **It is a responsibility entrusted you each year by every student and parent with a small piece of paper - a check for \$30,000.** I am sure your defense comes from the fact that this school, without any large endowments, does not have the funds to rectify the situation. It is the same defense my private high school used for years. But my high school pushed their funds towards opening new sections of popular classes, stocking equipment for more sections, and obtaining teachers for the new sections. Sometimes these changes were paid for, sometimes they were simply forced onto the teachers and students. But as demand for quality classes was met, students were pleased with their education, and the students (once they were in the work force) showed their appreciation with donations to the high school.

You may also say that students are facing these problems

only in particular areas of the college, namely writing, art, and film. But as I remember when I was applying to Hampshire College, these were the areas heralded by the school as their strongest. So why is it that a school claiming to have a strong film program does not have enough equipment for the student demand? Why is it that a college lauding its writing and art programs can not provide space for even half of the interested students? Logic would seem to require that a school claiming strengths in areas actually is strong, but there are twice as many students waiting to make it stronger. Or maybe it is not actually strong, and the claims are simply Marketing fluff.

If Hampshire College is an institution created to allow students

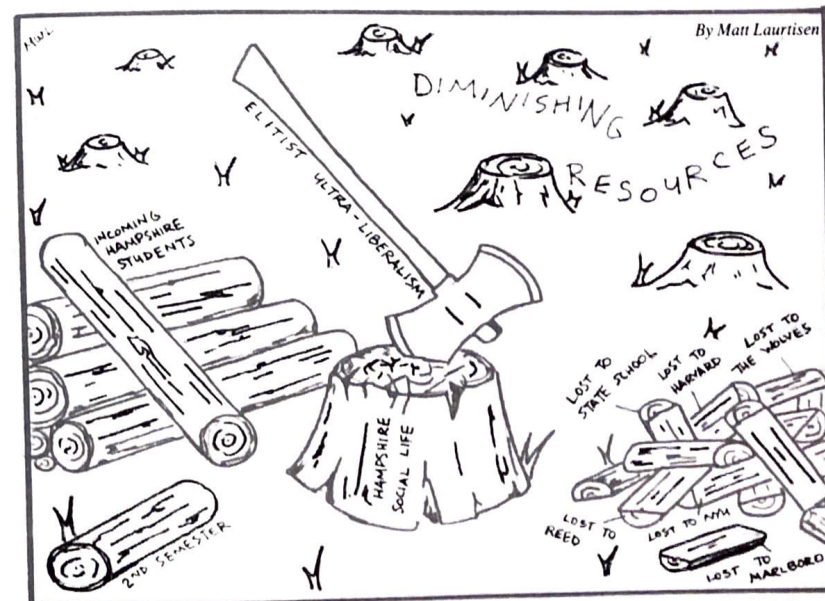
to learn by their own design then I would expect a full dedication to that principle. Your attempt at that principle is deficient. A school with such a principle would offer more sections of introductory courses, allowing students to expand their general knowledge and explore unknown fields. Subsequently, more sections of secondary classes would be offered, since more students would be able to take the introductory courses they wanted. Classes now are extremely specialized and limited in space, supplies, and flexibility. I would expect a mature rectification of these problems from a school dedicated to such high ideals, but all I have seen so far is childish protests of "Didn't do it! It's not my fault!"

Paul Turano, who teaches Film I, agrees with this sad state.

He is not alone. The student body recognizes the situation as does the faculty. In fact the state is doubly frustrating for the faculty. To quote both Alan Hodder and Paul Turano, "I would love to be able to teach everyone here, but there simply isn't enough space in the class. I'm sorry."

But Mr. Turano went on to pictorially document the Film lottery fiasco, and encouraged those turned away to write to the administration. So I am writing: on behalf of my frustration, the frustration of those unable to get their classes, on behalf of every person who has tried to wade through the muck of this unprofessional system. I guess I have the tiny hope that such an unprofessional system is capable of a mature reply.

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Reviews

The Postman Always Flops Twice

by Wade Stuckwisch

Picture this. You're a big Hollywood producer, sitting in your plush mahogany office smoking a fine pre-embargo Cuban, when in walks actor/director/writer Kevin Costner, straight off the \$150 million dollar post apocalyptic mega-flop *Waterworld*. After the slightest bit of obligatory Tinseltown palm-greasing, he kicks in with the pitch for his latest idea for a film: **a three hour, post-apocalyptic epic, written, directed and starring, Kevin Costner, and—get this—it's about a postman!** The cigar drops from your lips as you jump across the desk, grasping Kevin's hand in a death grip while simultaneously reaching for both a contract and your pocketbook to earmark another \$100+ million for this brave and highly promising new concept.

Do I really have to ask what's wrong with this picture?

Yes, folks, I was one of the unfortunate few (and I do mean few) who actually did go see *The Postman*. It was one of those situations where you're home from school and you and a very dear old friend want to go see a movie, but you've already

seen any film of any kind of merit and mutual interest. Well, to make a long intro briefer, we decided to witness this train wreck of a film just for the sheer horror of the spectacle.

Here's the surprise. It wasn't half as bad as I expected.

Don't get me wrong. It was bad. I mean it was piss poor. Whoever plunked down any of the money needed for the production of this film (including Kevin Costner) should have their lobotomy scars examined. But it wasn't the kind of movie that you earmark for immediate induction into your "Ten Worst Movies I've Ever Seen" list. (My personal list was topped by *Highlander III* until I saw *Mortal Kombat: Annihilation*. Ugh.)

Here's the premise for you. The United States has fallen into some sort of environmental/political shambles. Civilization exists only in small city-state type pockets. Our boy Kevin "Ass Double" Costner is a half-crazed wandering minstrel accompanied through the wastes of former Oregon only by his pet mule. (Wincing yet?) After a run-in with a generic dictator and his band of conscripted cronies, Costner comes across an ancient bag of mail, and attempts to use it to gain access to a random town by posing as a postal carrier for "the Restored United States government." Herein lies the central

concept of the film. Costner the Postman sews the seed for recreating a common bond among the long-separated denizens of said scattered city-states by reestablishing communication routes. Meanwhile, he knocks up some chick, acquires a band of kids (No! Anything but precocious pre-teen children!) as followers and fellow postmen, and seriously ticks off the aforementioned dictator. Conflict ensues, blah blah blah, happy ending, credits, hopefully you took a date to this movie or you just lost \$2-8 and three hours of your life.

The one thing that saved this movie was the whole restoration of a common national bond theme. Now don't get me wrong. I am not an especially patriotic or nationalistic individual. Actually, I tend to be much the other way. For example, I thought *Independence Day* was the worst piece of slambang Americanization propaganda I've ever seen. (The only good thing about it was that the world was saved by a black man and a Jew.) The difference between that movie and *The Postman* is the way they go about the whole nationalism thing. In short, **you can't fuck with the US Postal Service. They're a bunch of working stiffs, they bring**

you cool stuff sometimes and the only people they've ever shot are their own. Using a postman to represent the federal government was a slick little trick. The mailman shows up, you get a ten year old message from your long-lost sister, and then when someone waves a flag in your face it kind of gets you.

This brings me to the cheapest trick in the movie. Kev has started delivering the mail from town to town, he's picked up his first little helper, and what happens... Mein Fuher John Doe (the generic dictator) marches in, spots the flag flying over the ancient post office building, picks some poor sap out of the crowd, and demands that he burn it. What a cheap lousy trick. I mean, I love flag burning to death, and even I felt bad when poor Joe Schmoe had to raise a torch to that flag. It's a little different when someone burns their last connection to humanity than when you get forced to stand up and pledge you life to a droopy piece of cloth every day.

Basically, even though this movie raises some serious questions about nationalism and its value in society, it does it in a completely safe and sterile environment. Even the stock character dictator has been pasteurized for political innocuousness. He's obviously based on Hitler (his swastika has been replaced by the symbol of the "8," he refuses to allow women, blacks or Asians into his army, etc.), yet when he

explains his political stance to the fearful masses he explains it as "feudalism", a political concept which hasn't been a threat to Western society for centuries. We wouldn't want any dichotomies on state power in our little patriotic drama, now would we? Other than that, the movie was total crap. The concept was dumb and way out in left field, Kevin Costner still can't act, the ending was contrived and totally anti-climatic and the plot was a piece of shit. (Try to identify the "plot device law" in Dictator Guy's List of 8 Laws the first time he mentions them. It's not too hard. And yes, it does come into play later on.) And I kinda have problems with the fact that Costner's wondrous restored government is completely founded on lies and propagating lies (characters continually retell stories of a restored legislature and executive in Minneapolis to keep spirits up). Is Costner really trying to justify government lying in the name of restoring order? Now who's the dictator in this movie?

The one good thing I can say about this movie is what I've said about the concept of the Postman as the national government. That one thing puts this film a step above a lot of other crap movies with a completely undeveloped good concept. (*Johnny Mnemonic* and *Strange Days*

come to mind.) With a better beginning and ending and a few more explosions this movie could have been nominated for an Oscar in an off year. (Don't laugh. *Braveheart* won an Oscar, didn't it?) Surprisingly, the worst thing about this movie was the trailer. For some reason, whoever edited the trailer decided to take every cheesy, overdramatic line from the whole film and string them together. In the context of the movie, none of those lines were half as painful as they were in the trailer. But every time I saw that trailer in theaters, the whole audience laughed and groaned their way through it. I'll bet that trailer alone killed millions in the box office for this movie.

You know how this movie could have made money? Instead of the trailer they made for this movies, they should have just strung together every explosion, fire, sex scene, and dramatic full frame close-up in the movie, and ended it with one title card:

GO POSTAL THIS

HOLIDAY SEASON.

("Go Postal" gag by Jacob "Surly Boy" Chabot)

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Canada: a pretty lame place

by Jeff Barnett

A couple of weeks ago, I had a rather unearthsattering epiphany about our shockingly unshocking northern neighbors; Canada is a pretty lame place. I drove up one night to see an old friend who lives in Montreal. I had a very nice visit and brought back with me countless amusing anecdotes to relate to my genetically, culturally, and nationally superior American peers about (aboot) the Great White North. By the way, it's called the Great White North for a reason. Canada, or at least Quebec, was as racially homogeneous as Hampshire, if not more.

I rolled up to the border at around 7:30 or so at night. It had been dark there since probably the middle of the afternoon. I was greeted with an enthusiastic "Bon Jour!" from a chipper border patrol officer who seemed all too excited about being Canadian. She sent me on my way without even asking for my passport and I roared on through the dark, Canadian tundra. Dark, not necessarily because it was night, but dark because of the ice storms which had already wreaked havoc upon Hydro Quebec's electricity cables and towers, leaving over 200,000 Canooks powerless. Oh well, I thought to myself. That's what happens when you're the only people on the continent

of North America that speak French.

Relying upon my rusty French from high school, (Je m'appelle, Jeff. Quel heure est-il? Voulez-vous coucher avec moi?), I tried to read the confusing road signs as I approached Montreal. By that time, the phrase "Fucking Canadians" or "Fucking Canada", or something to that effect was about every third expression to come out of my mouth as I took wrong turns, got lost, wondered if I was going the wrong way down a one-way street, and cursed the Canadians. Eight "Le Car" sightings later, I arrived at my friend's apartment. We went to a neighborhood bar for dinner and sat and talked and watched a bleary-eyed French-speaking businessman lose all of his Canadian money on one of the video poker machines that seem to be runner-up to hockey for Canada's national pastime.

Montreal is actually quite a beautiful city with lots of angry Canadian artists and compulsive gamblers. Old Montreal is a lovely little neighborhood with cobblestone streets that are as narrow as an average obese American. It's just a shame that I couldn't see much of it

because three quarters of the city was without power. My friend told me that the power had been on the previous night, but Hydro Quebec had warned citizens and businesses to not use electricity unless it was absolutely necessary, lest their antiquated power system overload. However, the night that I was there, the stupid Canadians were using electricity like it was a privilege, not a resource.

Greedy pigs thought to myself: Never in America...

Now, you might think that the fifty-first state, as I like to call Canada, pretty much confines its irritating quirks and annoying idiosyncrasies to itself and its poor, unenlightened inhabitants. Yet Canada found a way of screwing me, in the form of the seven Canadian quarters and the eyecatching, but useless Canadian two dollar coin that still rest atop my dresser. Yeah, you try changing Canadian currency to real money in the states. Oh well, at least I'll always have that ridiculous Canadian play-money as a memento from my Great White Northern Adventure. Or until I go up to Casino Montreal and lose it in a video poker machine. Or throw it away. Or get change from a blind person.



a concert review. really

by Aemily dara Reshen

I thought about going to see concerts over the break. Really. I was planning on going to see the Ween concert in NYC. I swear. In fact, I would have if it hadn't required that much effort. I mean, I would have had to shower, get dressed, and worst of all leave the house!! Why couldn't I leave the house, you ask? Well, because in the wonderful world of Aemily, men rule everything and the women stay home to do the men's bidding. Seriously. I believe that men are the greatest creatures on earth. In fact, I had this holiday wish list:

- 1: The first wish has to do with the "Twelve Days of Christmas" song. It begins, "On the first day of Christmas, my true love gave to me..." I believe that this song need to be changed to something a little more appropriate like, "On the first day of Christmas, my true master - the men of earth - made me clean the house." I think that this version of the song is not only a great compliment to our true Gods (men) but also a great way to keep women in line.
- 2: This wish has to do with another holiday song - "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas, just like the ones I used to know..." I just love this song, because being from the North, we always

snuggle up at home when it is cold, waiting for our men to come home and tell us what to do. Oh... I guess that I didn't have a point with this wish.

- 3: Now this wish is to make things a little more equal for everyone in the world. We would make the richest company in the world create a research team of women who will conduct studies on how women can best serve men. Women need to see what its like to serve our true masters. And maybe we could also have the women conduct studies to find out how to make women have nocturnal emissions and uncontrollable woodies. Just so they can see what it is like.

- 4: My next wish that the day after women begin sporting hard-ons and spewing all over their sheets in the middle of the nights, companies like Tampax and Kotex will be taken off the market. That way the men can just sit back and watch us from their recliners as we run hysterically around the house looking for something that can double as a tampon or maxi-pad, while, of course, simultaneously fluffing the men's pillows and

rubbing their feet.

- 5. Insert lame generalization.
- 6. This wish is that the One True God - Mr. Manly-Man-Manly will return, forever enlightening women that their one duty is to serve man and have sex when ever he wants.
- 7. Wow... its getting late... almost time to make dinner for my man... This late hour will honor men and their penises and laugh at all women who don't understand.
- 8. I would really like to finish this wish list but I must obey my master and make dinner. I will leave with one final thought. A new rule that makes it so that women must run around the world cleaning every phallic-looking building (like the Eiffel Tower or World Trade Center) that stands over them, reminding them that the true master is man.

So that was my holiday wish list. Looking back, I guess I realize that anything that extreme is fucking ridiculous. I mean, while I'm at it why don't I just suggest that women rule that world and make men menstruate. Why don't I just suggest that we get rid of all heterosexuals - since, obviously, they are the true evil of society. Hmm... I just don't know what I was thinking.

****This article was inspired by Rebecca Mazer's Feminism 101 article in the December 12, 1997 issue of the Omen.**

What if Lynn Miller... Taught First Grade

by Kai Curtis

Disclaimer: This entirely fictional piece of writing is not intended to offend Lynn Miller, friends of Lynn Miller, family of Lynn Miller, pets of Lynn Miller including Jordan Strauss, or the members of the Official Lynn Miller Fan Club. Hell, I don't even know the man. But just from what I've heard from him, I respect and fear him. I hope he enjoys this. Yeah, so that's my disclaimer.

"Lynn Miller is like the Yasser Arafat of the Hampshire NS department. He'll tear out your spine and floss your nose with it." -Anon

Many Hampshire students know Lynn Miller is an educational force to be reckoned with; he's a veritable freight train of knowledge, a metaphorical juggernaut of academic mayhem. But suppose for a moment that in one of many other worlds - for it cannot be denied that there are other worlds! - Lynn Miller followed a different path in life. What if the man known as Lynn Miller had never happened upon Hampshire College. What if, earlier in his professional career, Lynn had fallen from grace, only to accept a job as a first grade teacher. Come along, watch as these alternate events unfold, and leave the women and children at home...

Imagine a first grade classroom in southern Nebraska. Ten children - no more, no less - wearing the school's uniform sit impatiently at their desks. A girl in the back of the room, Sally, takes her gum out of her mouth and sticks it under the seat from which her skinny legs dangle. Bobby, sitting in the second row, twiddles his thumbs in anticipation. The bell had sounded, but the teacher wasn't to be found. One minute turned into two, then five. Corey, the child nearest the door, couldn't take it anymore. He jumped out of his seat and bolted for the door.

Without warning, an arm shot

out of the toy chest like lightning! It was too late for Corey. Too late to slow down. Corey's throat slammed into the furry arm, crushing his larynx and flipping him over backwards.

The children gasped.

The lid to the toy chest slowly opened, smoke rising in delicate tendrils. The first thing to emerge was a raccoon skin hat. Next came the mighty furrowed brow that couldn't be mistaken. **Lynn Miller had arrived.** His eyes appeared next, the eyes of a man who'd seen war, death, pestilence, and Jewish Grandmothers. Slowly his full form emerged, his black turtleneck and tight black jeans accentuating the well-toned body that can only come with teaching twenty years of first grade. Lapis eyes glared at the children from the steel cow skull belt buckle that provided the only hint of color in Lynn's outfit.

"No one goes to the bathroom without asking the teacher first," Lynn mumbled as he fished around in his pockets. "And skipping class; well, that's a no-no."

Lynn jumped down from the table that the toy chest rested on, strolling leisurely to a desk near the front of the classroom. Apparently satisfied with his pocket hunting, Lynn pulled out a cigar.

Lynn spoke to the nearest child: "Jim."

"My name is Darryl, sir," the child meekly offered.

"Sure, Jim. Whatever. Will you do a poor old man a favor?"

Darryl had started to speak, had started to ask what the favor was, but screamed when his foot was crushed by Lynn's. Darryl's mouth open, Lynn shoved one end of his cigar in with one hand and slammed the child's jaw shut with the other. Darryl's

eyes opened wide as he instinctively swallowed the piece of the cigar. He fell to the ground, writhing momentarily before he completely stopped moving.

"Good for you, Jim. Builds character," Lynn muttered, walking to the front of the classroom and dropping heavily into his swivel chair. The children merely watched as the black rubber soles of Lynn's sneakers swung over the desk, coming to the children's eye level.

"Seeing as this is the first day of class, we're going to have to come to agreement on a couple of ground rules." Lynn slowly looked from child to child, ignoring the two corpses that already decorated the floor.

"First rule: I don't take bullshit. If you're trying to feed me bullshit, you die. Second rule, no laughter unless (a) I'm telling a story, (b) you're laughing at the expense of your fellow students, especially when they ask stupid questions, or (c) it's my own laughter. I love to hear myself laugh, because I'm smarter than you, and I laugh whenever **I fully comprehend how pathetic all of you are compared to MY BRAIN!**"

Lynn stood up and laughed, realizing that the children had no idea what he was talking about.

That is, no one except for a small, fair-skinned lad.

"Excuse me, sir. My name is Sir Nigel Winston Chamberlain the Third of Glastonbury, and I believe that your surly manner interrupts the learning process in this classroom. I believe that if you were less churlish, an inquiry-based method of education would be most properly efficient. I say, your current behavior casts quite the image of niggardly parsimoniousness upon your self. Perhaps you might consider seeing a therapist?"

Lynn promptly bit Nigel's head off.

"Mmm. Those British children always were good eatin'! Now, if I may continue, and damn it, I may. Next thing we're going to do is take a math test. Well, that's the next thing you'll do. I'll sit back and watch you squirm just because I can.

"Now, this is going to be an oral math test. I'm only going to ask one question, and only one student gets to answer. Get it?" The students nodded.

Lynn turned toward the blackboard, his hands clasped behind his back. "Oh," he said offhandedly, as if in some facetious afterthought. "If you get the question right, you pick someone else to die. And if you get the question wrong, you die." Lynn reached into his left boot and pulled out a 9mm handgun.

Lynn puffed menacingly at his cigar, his eyes dancing from student to student. Each child quivered in fear, warned by the deaths of three of their fellow students that this Lynn Miller fellow - whoever he may be, wherever he came from - was a badass motherfucker.

Lynn's eyes finally stopped on an awkward, lanky boy sitting in the farthest corner of the room.

"You, kid. What's... oh, what's 2+2? And what the hell's your name?"

"My name is Jimmy. And I believe the answer is... 4?"

"That's correct. Who's the lucky son of a bitch?"

"Well, sir, please kill me. My head is far too large for my neck to support, and I'm afraid that one of these days, my neck will simply snap while I'm moshing at a Raffi concert. I pray every day that I will die, so that my friends and family will not grow any

A Tasteless Cathartic Romp Through the Dandelions of Literature

more attached to me."

The skin below Lynn's left eye quivered subtly as a single tear flowed down his cheek.

"You know kid, that's touching. Good stuff, really. You're willing to sacrifice your life to prevent others from suffering. It's just like me, in the war. The world needs another good war. But the world also needs more good people like you, kid. I'll shoot John instead."

Thus, John got his head blown off.

"Well, class is almost over and I haven't had a question and answer session yet! There needs to be a question and answer section at the end of every class. I mean, if you don't ask some questions, how're you mute kids ever going to learn anything?"

The room was silent except for the quiet sound of chairs squeaking as the few living children shook in fear. Once again, Lynn looked around the room meticulously, taking in each child slowly and deeply. After all, Lynn never forgot a face, especially when it belonged to a corpse.

Lynn began to turn, but whipped around quickly when Alex, a chubby little boy, raised a hand in the air. He spit his cigar into his hand and threw it as hard as he could at little Alex. Alex barely had time to scream as the heat of the embers on the cigar boiled the liquid in his eye. Alex's eye quickly exploded, sending shards of skull into his brain and killing him instantly.

Lynn looked at the stump that was Alex's head and sighed.

"It always happens once a year. I see a student holding a pencil raise his hand out of the corner of my eye. And ever since my surgery, I keep mistaking that damn pencil for an M-60. But who doesn't mistake a pencil for an automatic weapon at one time

or another. And God knows that instinct has saved my life more than once."

Lynn grunted. **"I guess I'd better order some flowers for the parents to express my condolences. Or maybe some car wax; I know I've got some extra car wax. Hell, I'm not sending them anything. I mean, there's no use crying over spilled milk. Unless you're doing genetics. Whatever. Oh, one other thing to take care of."**

Lynn walked over to Sally, his most amiable smile on display. Sally, smiled back, thinking that perhaps she had somehow maneuvered her way into his good graces. Lynn placed his hand on her head and started stroking her hair. Sally, hoping to charm the pants off Lynn, batted her eyes. Lynn responded by palming Sally's head and crushing it.

"Sorry kids, but I hate children who put gum on the furniture. Really ruins things. She thought I couldn't see her from the toy chest, but I've got myself a peephole. Yes, I'm smart. Damn smart. Sally, on the other hand, was not smart. Remember that, kids."

The bell rang. Class was over.

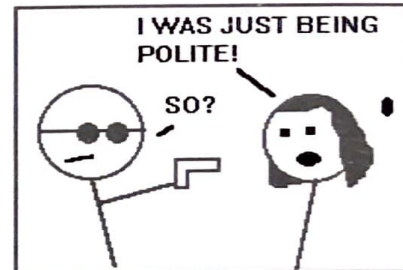
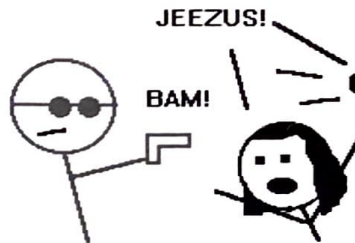
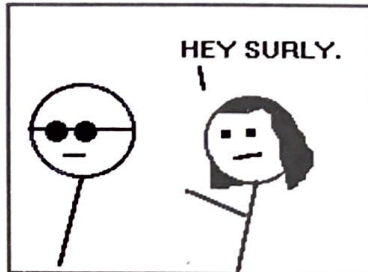
"Well, kids. That's it. I'm not much for teaching more than one class per year. I mean, really. Wears on the nerves, destroys brain cells, causes infertility, and all of that crap. So you four who survived get to go on to second grade next year. It's been fun. And if there's a deposition, make sure that I'm never mentioned. Otherwise, I'll hunt you down. And I'm a good hunter, kids. Real good."

With that, Lynn handed out a cigar to each child, laughed, and left, his shadowy figure cutting into the horizon like a starless night.



Some Surly Valentines

BEING THE CHICK MAGNET
THAT I AM, I KNOW HOW
IMPORTANT IT IS TO CARRY
PROTECTION ...



THIS VALENTINE'S DAY, TAKE A LESSON FROM SURLY BOY.

ONLY YOU
CAN PREVENT
COOTIES!



THIS VALENTINE'S DAY, JUST
TAKE A MOMENT TO REMEMBER
THAT HALLMARK AND OTHER
COMPANIES LIKE THEM ARE
MANIPULATING YOUR PRIMAL
SEX DESIRES SO THAT THEY
CAN MAKE MILLIONS!



HAVE A HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!
IT'S THE CAPITALIST THING TO DO.

HEY BABY,
KISS...



MY ASS!!

HAVE A SURLY
VALENTINE'S DAY